

feelings? I don't know her by yee_hawlw

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Summary:

El is weird.

El *makes* her feel weird.

feelings? I don't know her

Author's Note:

i have no idea what this is

Max had told her mom and her step-dick that she would be staying the night at the Hoppers', just her and Jane, having one last sleepover before school started. Neil doesn't particularly like Jane, but he respects the Chief, and it was more acceptable to him and her mom than a co-ed sleepover at the Byers'.

Joyce was more than happy to have all of Will's friends over. She made pancakes Eggos for El and pancakes for everyone else for dinner and bought a tub of vanilla ice cream to share.

They played a fair bit into their campaign (with Mike taking every opportunity he could to complain about Max's homebrew zoomer class not making any sense) then they watched a movie. They were planning on doing more than watching movies, but then Will fell asleep halfway through *Ghost Busters* . Everyone else followed him into dreamland soon after.

Except Max.

Her fingers tap relentlessly against her thigh. She stares, unblinking, at the ceiling above.

Mike and Will had scored the couch. Dustin had claimed the recliner. After everyone else had fallen asleep, Lucas pushed himself off the floor on Max's right, said, "Fuck this," and went into Will's room to most likely sleep on his bed. And El is...

Max glances at her. El is curled up on the floor to her left, snoring softly. Curly hair frames her face.

They are sharing a blanket.

They are sharing a blanket, and Max isn't quite sure how she is feeling about that. She wants it to be *good* - it is good - but it also feels... *bad* . Weird. *She* feels weird.

“Fuck this,” she mumbles, echoing Lucas’ previous sentiments.

Max throws the blanket off of her. She pushes herself up off the floor, heading over to the kitchen.

“Where do they keep the damn cups in this house,” Max mutters under her breath after opening her third cabinet and *still* not finding cups.

“What are you looking for.”

Max nearly jumps through the roof. “Eleven!” She spins around to face the other girl, clutching her hand over her heart. “Jesus *fuck* , you nearly scared me half to death!”

El furrows her brows. She doesn't always *get* metaphors, but she seems to at least understand that that *was* one. “Sorry,” she says. “What are you looking for?”

“The, uh - the cups,” Max says.

El simply tilts her head to the side. A cabinet next to Max’s head flies open, and a single cup floats out. It hovers until she reaches out to take it.

“Thanks.”

“Welcome.”

“What are you doing up?”

El raises an eyebrow. “What are *you* doing up?”

“I needed some water,” she says. It's half of the reason why. “What are you doing up?” she repeats.

El shrugs. “I felt you get up,” she says simply. “I wondered where you were going.”

“Yeah, well,” she gestures at her entire self, “here I am.”

El’s head dips a couple of degrees to maintain her steady, slightly

unnerving eye contact as she steps closer. She and Mike grew like weeds over the summer.

“Are you okay?”

Max lifts one corner of her mouth into a grin. “Um. Yeah? Why wouldn't I be?”

“You look turbulent.”

“‘Perturbed’ is probably the word you're looking for,” Max says. Not because *she's* perturbed - of course not - but El isn't good with words and Max doesn't mind helping out.

“Perturbed,” El echoes. “You look perturbed.”

Max waves a hand through the air. “Nah, I'm fine,” she says. “I just needed some water.”

Eleven nods. She walks over by Max and turns her body around stiffly. She reclines on her elbows on the counter, stiff and awkward. The position looks carefully studied and practiced. It reminds Max of Steve, maybe. She guesses El is copying a pose that she's seen him do.

El's eyes stay trained on Max as she gets water from the tap. “Can you get perturbed from needing water?”

“Yeah,” Max says. She turns off the tap and takes a drink of water. “It depends on the person. People get irritated by different things, at different levels.”

“Are you perturbed because you didn't have water?”

Max huffs. “I'm not-!” She shakes her head. “Perturbed. I'm *not* perturbed.” She sets her glass down on the counter and leans next to El. “I just. Needed some space for a bit, okay?”

“Oh.” El stares intently at empty space. “Do you want me to leave?”

Max considers.

Being around El makes her feel...charged. Tense. Jumpy. Like she

needs to get up and run around for a bit to blow off some steam. Or like she's about to be caught doing something wrong.

At the same time El makes her feel calm. When they're alone, that is. When there's nobody around to catch them. What exactly is she so afraid of being caught doing with El? She isn't sure. Just existing next to her, maybe.

"No," Max says. "You can stay. If you want."

El nods a single, slow nod. She settles even further into her reclined position, looking increasingly unnatural and forced.

Max tucks an arm under the other and sips her water every so often. She stares at the clock as it time ticks by. From the living room, she can hear Will and Mike snoring.

"High school," El says suddenly. "How do you feel about going into high school?" This also feels copied and practiced.

Max shrugs. She looks down, scuffing her heel against the tile. "It'll be okay, I guess," she says. "At least I won't be the new kid anymore."

"Hopper said high school is hell."

Max snorts. "So is middle school." She glances up at El. "It'll be new. Scary, maybe, but nowhere near the scariest thing we've faced before, yeah?"

El grunts in agreement and gives the barest hint of a smile. Her eyes flick down to El's lips. A red hot feeling burns with shame in her chest and she immediately snaps her gaze up to meet El's eyes again.

She quickly downs what little is left of her water and tosses the cup in the sink. She refuses to meet El's eyes as she speaks. "You ready to head back?"

El makes a noise of affirmation. She lets Max leave the kitchen first before following, shutting the dim light with a wave of her pointer finger from across the room.

El immediately reclaims her spot on the floor, curling up in the blanket. Max wants to lay next to her, but then she thinks about maybe cuddling up with El, and she knows she shouldn't.

"I'm going to go see if Jonathan's bed is suitable to sleep on," Max whispers. Dustin stirs a bit, mumbling indistinctly. Max flinches and lowers her voice even further. "Sleeping on the floor hurts my back."

El nods. Now that she has full custody, she burritos herself in the blanket.

Jonathan's room is dark and empty. A piece of dismantled tech on the floor causes Max to stub her toe, hard, and nearly sends her toppling to the floor.

She curses lightly under her breath and hops the rest of the way over to the bed. She gets as comfy as she can, and doesn't fall asleep for the rest of the night.

Author's Note:

reviews really do mean a lot to me!

you can find me on tumblr here
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